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ABSTRACT

This report discusses the evolution of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools' Commission on Higher Education (CHE/MSA) from the point of view of the Commission's Executive Director during his successive tenure as Assistant Executive Secretary, Associate Director, and Executive Director from 1974 until his departure in 1995. It chronicles the major events and challenges faced by CHE, including the decision to provide accreditation to degree-granting proprietary schools, the formulation of the Periodic Review Report protocol, changes in information technology, and increasing staff size and capabilities. The report highlights the contributions of past and current staff members and commissioners, and provides a statistical profile of the Middle Atlantic States region covered by CHE. It also provides information on the peer review process and CHE actions on accreditation. The report concludes by offering predictions on the issues and challenges that will be faced by higher education in general and CHE in particular in coming years. (MDM)

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ED 388 196

TRANSITIONS

REFLECTIONS AND PREDICTIONS

A Special Report of the Executive Director 1974–1995

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A Special Report of the
Executive Director
1974–1995

Commission on Higher Education
Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools

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Fax: (215) 662–5501

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TRANSITIONS

REFLECTIONS AND PREDICTIONS

Unlike previous annual reports that I have had the privilege of preparing, either as Associate Director or Executive Director, this annual report is a departure from the norm. My decision to leave the Commission on Higher Education (CHE) to take on another career opportunity provides me with the unique opportunity to survey, in capsule fashion, what life has been like for me during more than two decades with the Commission, how I have been able to witness and share in the unfolding history of the Commission and of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (MSA), and how I have used the considerable knowledge and experience I gained in a highly respected accrediting body to speculate about what is likely to happen in the field of accreditation in the future. This report is my assessment of the past, present, and future prospects for the Commission, within the national context of accreditation and higher education in the United States.

The report is divided into three major sections. The first deals with what I label "Reflections: Then and Now" and the important people with whom I currently work and to whom I respond professionally. They are featured as an eternal reminder of the human and humane dimensions of the Commission's work. The second, "Implications of Statistical Profiles of the Middle States Region," presents important institutional statistics that serve as the foundation for the Commission's work and decision making. It further adds my analysis of the data and my assessment of how the information will have an impact on accreditation by the MSA Commission on Higher Education. The final part, "Predictions," identifies the issues that I feel will be center stage for accreditors, including CHE/MSA, in the years immediately ahead.

The core of what I am reporting here is the relationships between important milestones in the Commission's history and how I contributed to them during my 21-year tenure. Aside from reserving the right to write a more definitive book on my recollections of the triumphs and travails of the small, special-purpose world of accreditation—with particular emphasis on my involvement, both by interaction and intervention, in the Middle States region—I offer, in this expanded annual report, reflections on the past and present as prologue.

As I embark upon the difficult task of developing and implementing a Center for Accreditation and Quality Assurance to be connected with my new role at Arizona State University in 1996, this annual report will serve to remind me of the role that the Commission has had and will continue to have in addressing a number of complex issues facing higher education and accreditation.

— Howard L. Simmons, Ph.D.
Executive Director

Reflections: Then and Now

Whether good, bad, or indifferent, much transpired while I served the Commission successively as Assistant Executive Secretary, Associate Director, and Executive Director. This report chronicles the major events as they occurred and their impact on the staff, our constituency, and the Commission.

Office Relocation and Staff Leadership Changes

When I arrived for my first day of work in 1974, the offices of the Commission and the Middle States Association were located at One Gateway Center in Newark, New Jersey, but the vast majority of my time with the Commission has been in its several offices at 3624 Science Center in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

During the slightly more than two years spent in the New Jersey location, I had the opportunity to work with three of the five chief executive officers in the Commission's history: Dr. Harry W. Porter, who hired me away from Northampton County Area Community College; Dr. Dorothy Petersen, who brought real organizational and people skills to the Commission during her short tenure as Acting Executive Secretary and who was one of my first real mentors; and Dr. Robert Kirkwood, having just returned to the Commission as Executive Director in 1976 after an interlude of several years with the Federation of Regional Accrediting Commissions of Higher Education, in Washington, D.C., and the Danforth Foundation, in St. Louis, Missouri, who made it possible for me to develop further and to hone my administrative skills relating to accreditation.

Proprietary Schools

The first two years of my tenure in Newark also marked the time when the Middle States Association, after several years of study following the landmark *Marjorie Webster* case, voted to permit proprietary degree-granting institutions to apply for status with the Commission on Higher Education. Since I had just completed my dissertation on degree-granting proprietary schools in the Middle States region and their impact on the development of community colleges, I was given the responsibility of developing a set of special guidelines for the evaluation of these for-profit institutions, guidelines which were withdrawn and folded into the Commission's eligibility requirements and standards only in recent years.

The PRR

The Periodic Review Report (PRR) was conceptualized during the Newark epoch, and I formulated the first set of administrative guidelines for the preparation and review of the uniquely Middle States five-year report. Thus, I witnessed the evolutionary development of the PRR from an informal progress report, reviewed by a "ghost" external reader, to a more formal, five-year review process that results in a decision on the accredited status of an institution.

Having been implemented in 1978 and substantively revised in 1988, the Periodic Review Report protocol today is completely institutionalized. From 1989–94, for instance, Commission actions on 256 Periodic Review Reports reflected practically the full range of possibilities, including reports accepted, acknowledged, postponed/deferred, or warned (Table 9). Because the PRR requires attention to recommendations resulting from the previous self-study and evaluation process and is tied to institutional planning, this relationship probably gives rise to the incorrect perception that the self-study and PRR processes inform and depend upon each other.

A Planning Process

The preparation and implementation of a continuous planning process during my tenure provides for periodic self-study by the Commission of its effectiveness in providing services to its constituents and other communities of interest.

The first major Commission self-study was undertaken in 1989–90 and resulted in recommendations that virtually have been implemented, including the formulation and adoption of a mission statement for the Commission. This mission statement will be tested in 1995 and 1996, as the Commission again has initiated a comprehensive self-study process that involves not only the usual institutional constituents but also other stakeholders, such as policymakers, parents, and students.

Information Technology

Perhaps more than anything else in enhancing the Commission's ability to implement its mission and agenda has been the development and implementation, since 1988, of more comprehensive and reliable databases on institutions and evaluators. Though my own affinity for technology and the Commission's support for improvement initiatives were partly responsible for our push to use technology more effectively, the addition of professional staff members who are more proficient in information technology probably accounts for the Commission's success in this area.

In the late 1980s, the Commission embarked upon a program to convert its inadequate, cumbersome, and time consuming process of creating and maintaining evaluator files into a computerized and more user-friendly system. However, triumph over the old system did not come easily. Because academics do not always give the Commission timely notice of changes in their professional status and location, a significant amount of incorrect information was entered inadvertently. Although the evaluator database always will need to be updated, responding to the constant movement of higher education professionals, the Commission has been more successful in achieving greater accuracy in its institutional database.

In 1995–96, for the first time, the Commission will provide institutions with the opportunity to file their Annual Institutional Profiles on computer diskettes. Even if only 50 percent of the 501 member and candidate institutions take advantage of this technological application, the Commission will have made significant progress in eliminating yet another labor intensive system that depends on paper documentation.

As I observe in the last section of this report, accrediting organizations, such as the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, will need to find still other effective uses for the capacity to transfer electronically information that is essential to the continued devolution of accreditation processes.

The Staff

The increase in size and professional capacity of the staff has been important to the improved effectiveness of the Commission. This is especially true of individuals who have been added with specific expertise in computer applications, publications, research and development, meeting planning, and data management, on one hand, and assessment, international education, distance learning, off-campus programs, program review, and community colleges, on the other hand.

Somehow I knew that the retirement of Assistant Director Dorothy P. Heindel—who continues to enhance my own historical knowledge of the Commission—would result in our having to find several persons to perform the myriad duties and tasks she carried out singlehandedly and with great aplomb!

In the approximately six months in 1988 when I served as Executive Director-Elect, I realized how important it would be to develop a new three-year planning process, undergirded by the computerized database management system discussed above. These projects were initiated immediately and have been functioning effectively since that time.

The Staff of the Commission in the 1980s

(L to R): Dr. Howard L. Simmons, Associate Director; Mrs. Dorothy P. Heindel, Assistant Director; Dr. Minna F. Weinstein, Associate Director; Ms. Jacqueline Ciminera, Administrative Assistant; Dr. Robert Kirkwood, Executive Director; Ms. Alice Glover, Secretary; Mrs. Vivian L. Ellis, Administrative Secretary; and Ms. Denise Whitcomb, Secretary

The Commission today is fortunate to have a highly competent administrative and support staff, one that is thoroughly professional and has considerable expertise in a wide range of areas. The administrative staff includes the Executive Associate Directors, the Assistant Directors, and the Coordinators.

The Executive Associate Directors carry out their primary role of interacting with member, candidate, and applicant institutions, especially in interpreting Commission policies and processes relative to self-study, evaluation, periodic review, follow-up, and institutional change. Data for 1995 provide a typical pattern of activity that involves both site visits and office consultations (Table 1).

They also assist in implementing the Commission agenda in many other ways. Given the rapidity of change in higher education and the manner in which accrediting agencies must respond to their communities of interest, all members of the Commission's administrative and support staff devoted increasingly more time to policy development and review as well as to external matters.

In 1995, for example, Senior Executive Associate Director Minna F. Weinstein continued her coordination of the Commission's unique study abroad evaluation program. Of course, she had the critical and extremely valuable assistance of Dr. Margaret Matson, Professor Emerita of Pennsylvania State University and a former member of the Commission. Dr. Matson also helped Dr. Weinstein in successfully bringing to fruition a conference for stateside directors of study abroad programs, which was attended by more than 75 participants. Perhaps her most important assignment, and one that will carry over into 1996, is her service as staff liaison to the Task Force on Graduate and Professional Education, chaired by CHE Commissioner and Princeton Professor of English John Fleming.

Having successfully worked with the Commission's Task Force on Transfer and

Table 1
Staff Visits and Consultations
1995

Visits for Self-Study Preparation	65
Visits to Inquiring Institutions	3
Follow-up Visits	38
Small Team and Other Special Visits	36
Office Consultations with Institutional Representatives	23

Articulation to develop and get adopted a new policy on these critical higher education issues, Associate Director John H. Erickson also completed another assignment as the primary staff person for the development of a more coherent Commission policy on institutional change. He still found time to make further enhancements to the unique CHE *Office and Staff Procedures Manual*, which is designed to assist both current and future staff in the orderly and systematic handling of a number of ongoing and special activities of the Commission. He also continued to promulgate the work of the Commission through his active participation as a presenter and panelist at national meetings of the American Association for Higher Education and the American Association of Community Colleges.

Assisting in the continuation and development of relations with external bodies was Executive Associate Director Arturo U. Iriarte, who represented me at the Annual Conference of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities and coordinated a visit by a delegation from Kuwait to the Commission office. Offshore, Dr. Iriarte has continued to enhance his diplomatic skills by working with a broad range of institutions in Puerto Rico, and he soon will apply his skills in Kuwait.

The newest administrative staff member, but by no means the least acquainted with regional accreditation, is Executive Associate Director Dr. Gerald W. Patton. He has been actively involved in making presentations to regional and national groups on the Commission's role in outcomes assessment. In 1995 alone, he made presentations to the Pennsylvania State Board of Education Council of Higher Education, the Fourth Inter American University Assessment Conference, the Council of Presidents of the New Jersey Commission on Higher Education, and the American Association for Higher Education. Similarly, he helped the Assessment Advisory Committee complete its charge to develop a policy statement on assessment and a revised *Framework for Outcomes Assessment* for Commission and constituency approval, and he worked with Administrative Associate Director Robin Dasher-Alston in developing the recommended roster and charge for the new Task Force on Distance Learning.

Dr. Robin Dasher-Alston, in addition to serving as a staff liaison to the Task Force on Distance Learning, continued her highly productive work in the area of planning, budgeting, and management systems. In 1995, for example, she took on major responsibility for CHE office renovations, the purchase and installation of a new telephone and voice mail system, and the successful search for a new information technician. Perhaps with the greatest potential for streamlining and improving the Commission's data collection process has been her leadership in developing the Remote Annual Profile (ReAP).

Moreover, she successfully handled new professional responsibilities for assessing the preapplication materials from institutions interested in seeking candidacy for accreditation status with the Commission and for various follow-up and special visits directed by the Commission. In the midst of all this activity, she was able to represent the Commission and expand her professional quotient in higher education by her active participation in meetings of the National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO). She also conducted a professional staff retreat for members of the support staff last summer.

One only has to look at the quantity and quality of the Commission's publications to appreciate the addition to the staff of Mr. Oswald M. T. Ratteray, Assistant Director for Constituent Services and Special Programs. They are a major part of his ever-expanding list of professional responsibilities. Not only have improvements been made to the format and content of the *CHE Letter*, but several new CHE publications have been designed, developed, and produced because of his tremendous skills.

These include the following: 1) The CHE 75th anniversary commemorative book, *Volunteers and CHE: Partners in the Quest for Excellence*;

2) *Information Literacy: Lifelong Learning in the Middle States Region*; 3) *Independence or Interdependence: Can Government and Accrediting Organizations Get Along?* 4) "Noble Goals and Flawed Strategies," a summary of five regional forums on proposals by the National Policy Board on Higher Education Institutional Accreditation; 5) "Institutional Effectiveness through Self-Study in the Middle States Region," a 1995 self-study research project; and 6) "Information Literacy in Higher Education: A Report on the Middle States Region," an analysis of data on the Middle States region from a national research project.

In addition, he has been involved in the major revision and editing of numerous Commission publications, some of which were *What is Accreditation? Candidacy for Accreditation; Directory: Accredited Membership and Candidates for Accreditation, 1994* and *1995*; and *Handbook for Chairing and Hosting an Evaluation Team*. As important in the overall improvement of Commission communications with member institutions and the public, Assistant Director Ratteray has developed quality advertising flyers, brochures, and other items that have drawn positive attention to the work of the Commission.

Working closely with Mr. Ratteray is Assistant Director for Policy Development Mary Beth Kait, whose orientation to the Commission has been aided significantly by her systematic review and analysis of most of the Commission's statements of policy and procedure. Besides serving as the key policy analyst for the staff, Ms. Kait proved her mastery of Commission documents by taking on the major responsibility for revising the policy statement, "Institutional Responsibilities in Accreditation," and for constructing a useful classification of Commission documents.

On the national scene, she has represented me and the Commission at meetings of the Council on the Recognition of Postsecondary Accreditation (CORPA) and the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI) at the U.S. Department of Education. She is the staff member who prepared the Commission's petition for continued recognition by these agencies. Upon my recommendation, she also participated in meetings called under the auspices of the National Policy Board on Higher Education Institutional Accreditation (NPB).

Because Mrs. Vivian L. Ellis, as Evaluation Services Coordinator, joined the staff of the Commission just one year after the Middle States Association moved its offices to Philadelphia in 1976, she now will have the distinction of having the longest tenure and "institutional memory" of anyone in the office. That is partly the reason why she continues to coordinate almost two dozen CHE committee meetings involving reports from literally hundreds of institutions each year.

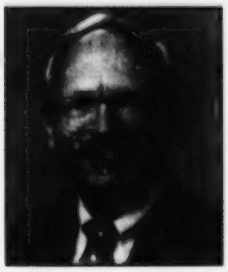
Coordinator of Office Support Services C. D. Brown, who worked primarily with my office until recently, has shown her special abilities in organizing the Commission's general office files and archives. At the same time, she continues to handle the distribution of work directed to members of the support staff and to coordinate the purchase and control of office supplies and services. Unfortunatley, her involvement in a recent automobile accident has resulted in a temporary delay in our progress toward the further enhancement of our office support procedures.

Providing major input into and support for the Commission's upgraded computer and information systems is Computer Services Coordinator Wyade A. White. In addition, he has been of immense assistance to other members of the staff in their orientation to the E-mail and Internet capabilities of the Commission. His next objective will be to develop a "home page" for the Commission on the World Wide Web.

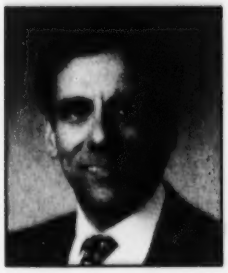
Given the prominent role that members of the professional and support staff have in assisting me in carrying out the agenda of the Commission, I have chosen to remember each one in this final report by including their photographs on the following pages, along with brief descriptors as I choose to remember them.

The Staff of the Commission in 1995

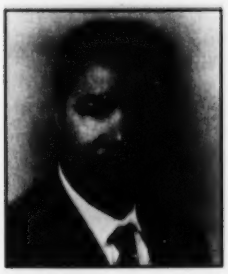
Dr. Minna F. Weinstein, *Senior Executive Associate Director*, was hired in 1980, after the unexpected resignation of another Associate Director and a critical appraisal of evaluators who had the best peer reviewer records! She still has her trademark wit and charm after 'ere so many years.



Dr. John H. Erickson's employment as Associate Director (now Executive Associate Director) coincided with the beginning of my tenure as Executive Director. His University of Chicago training in English continues to serve the Commission well in policy development and editorial assistance!



Dr. Arturo U. Iriarte, Executive Associate Director, because of his Spanish-speaking ability, will become the Commission's new "Ambassador" to Puerto Rico, a title bestowed upon me 20 years ago!



Dr. Gerald W. Patton, Executive Associate Director, who made the transition from the North Central Association to the Middle States region, has taken up the mantle of assessment and distance learning, two of the hottest topics in higher education today!

Dr. Robin Dasher-Alston, Administrative Associate Director, hired to create a coherent and effective database management system, not only has met expectations in this area but also has demonstrated her ability to deal effectively with institutional reviews!

Mr. Oswald M.T. Ratteray, Assistant Director for Constituent Services and Special Programs, is the staff member with the quintessential skill of prompting searches for new thinking about old forms, and perfection is his by-word!

Ms. Mary Beth Kait, Assistant Director for Policy Development, who has been a quick study in learning the what and why of the Commission, has just about made her way through the maze of policies and procedures!

Ms. Vivian L. Ellis Coordinator of Evaluation Services (also providing Notary Public services), after my departure from the Commission, will have the longest tenure at Middle States. Perhaps she will have the best

Ms. Clara D. Brown, Administrative Assistant for Office Support Services, whose tenure coincides with mine as Executive Director, will now have more time to devote to maintaining files and archives of the Commission!

Ms. Carmella R. Morrison, Office Assistant, who quietly and competently assists in preparations for numerous CHE committee meetings, continuing her professional growth through study at the Community College of Philadelphia!

Mr. Wyade A. White, recently promoted to Coordinator of Computer Services, soon will design the Commission's home page on the World Wide Web—a far cry from his initial duties when he was hired as Clerk in 1986!

Ms. Victoria Clark, our newest Office Associate, in addition to assisting with workshops and conferences, is the Commission's key arranger of staff travel!

Ms. Margaret L. Robbins Office Associate, who was a microbiologist in her former life, has mastered the handling of workshop logistics and responses to unusual queries to the Commission!

Mr. Tze Joe, Information Technician, is the newest member of the staff. Part of his early orientation has been the correction of entries in the evaluator database, when he was not printing mailing labels!

Ms. Christina L. Ryan, who worked with me in the 1970s, when I was a Dean at Northampton Community College, is still our fastest and most accurate data entry Office Associate. However, she still finds time to provide clerical support to the Study Abroad Program reviews!

Mr. Marcus L. Lindsay, Clerk, though relieved by our new voice mail system from some telephone answering, still processes all incoming mail, including documents related to the accreditation process!

The Commissioners

The recollections I have of my interactions with an array of Commissioners during my professional employment with Middle States, whether they served one year or a maximum of two three-year terms, are very pleasant indeed. I would like very much to provide a personal account of each such experience, but the limited space in this annual report precludes such an approach, especially since there were 31 Commissioners who served during my seven-year tenure as Executive Director. Thus, I simply will comment that my career has been enriched because of the unselfish devotion of so many public and institutional representatives who have served and continue to serve the constituents of the Middle States region.

However, I pay special tribute to the Executive Committee members who were in place at the time of my initial appointment as Executive Director: Dr. Sarah R. Blanshei, who was Chair; Dr. Robert W. Chambers, who was Vice Chair and later became Chair; Dr. Rafael L. Cortada, who is no longer in the region but is President of Central Ohio Technical College; President Leon M. Goldstein, who became Chair and is now President-Elect of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools; and Carolyn Landis, who was a Public Member and Vice Chair.

I also had the privilege of working with four Commission Chairs, who had distinctive styles of leadership and all of whom were supportive of the duties I had to discharge as Executive Director.

The first was Dr. Sarah R. Blanshei, then Provost at Lafayette College and now Dean of the College at Agnes Scott College, who was Chair when I was installed as Executive Director and with whom I worked quite harmoniously for the ensuing year; the second was Dr. Robert Chambers, still President of Western Maryland College and who provided support as well during the debate over the Commission stance on diversity; the third was CUNY-Kingsborough Community College President Leon M. Goldstein, who, with the help of the Executive Committee, shepherded the Commission through the diversity crisis and who provided strong support to then MSA-President Vera King Farris in bringing about greater autonomy for the Commission; and the fourth is Dr. Stephen M. McClain, current Chair, who presided over the successful adoption of the revised *Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education*, the Commission's primary statement of standards for accreditation. Because of my decision to change careers, Dr. McClain has the responsibility of leading the Commission in the process of finding my replacement.

The current members of the Commission represent the members' ideals and serve as the group to which I direct my thanks and admiration. Therefore, I include on the following pages a photographic reminder of the individuals who have provided encouragement for my ideas and strong support for my leadership.

The Commission has a diverse membership, representing the broad spectrum of constituent institutions. Currently, there are 24 members, including 11 chief executive officers, five faculty members, two academic officers, one student affairs officer, and four public members. The President of the Middle States Association serves in an ex-*officio* capacity. At a time when accountability and assessment are paramount in accreditation, it is important that the Commission maintain a balanced membership.

Members of the Commission

Chair and
Member, Exec. Committee
Dr. Stephen M. McClain
Vice Provost
Johns Hopkins University

Vice-Chair and
Member, Exec. Committee
Ms. Patricia McGuire, Esq.
President
Trinity College

Vice-Chair and
Member, Exec. Committee
Dr. Frank Pogue
Vice Chancellor for
Student Affairs
State University
of New York

Sr. Dorothy Ann Kelly,
OSU
Member, Exec. Committee
President
College of New Rochelle

Dr. Peter Spina
Member, Exec. Committee
President
Monroe Community
College

Dr. W. Sherrill Babb
President
Philadelphia College
of Bible

Dr. Margarita Benitez
Professor
University of Puerto Rico
Cayey University College

Dr. Dorothy Brown
Professor
Georgetown University

Dr. Elizabeth Chang
Professor
Hood College

Ms. Jeanette Cole,Esq.
Public Member
Law Offices of
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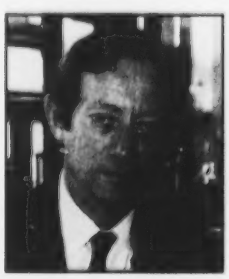
Dr. William B. DeLauder
President
Delaware State
University

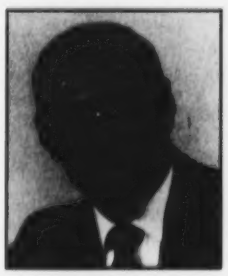


Dr. John Fleming
Professor
Princeton University

Members of the Commission

Dr. Catherine Gira
President
Frostburg State
University

Ms. Leslie Glass
Public Member
Novelist
New York



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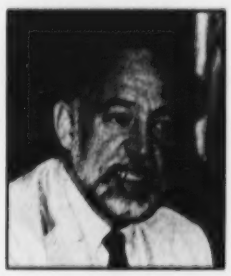
Public Member
Regional Exec. Director
The College Board
Middle States Office



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and the Arts
Hunter College, CUNY

Dr. John Kingsmore
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Community College of
Allegheny County

Rev. James Lackenmier
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Arts Center

Dr. A. Zachary Yamba
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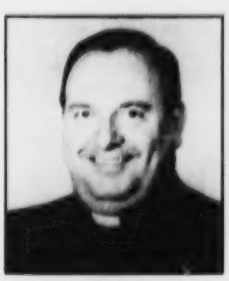
Essex County College



The Rev. Canon
Gary J. DeHope
Ex-Officio Member
(President, MSA)
Director/Headmaster
The Episc. Cathedral Sch.

Two Decades of Policy Evolution and Enhancement

The Commission's most active agenda item during the last seven years has been policy development and dissemination. In addition to the successful revision of *Characteristics of Excellence*, which involved the largest number ever of constituents and other communities of interest in its review, the Commission, through its appointed task forces and advisory committees, has adopted and disseminated a significant number of policies that have serve to improve its effectiveness and the effectiveness of member and candidate institutions. These policies include the following:

- "Transfer and Articulation," the policy statement which replaced the outdated statement entitled "Transfer Students";
- *Handbook for Periodic Review Reports*, which existed for many years in mimeographed form;
- "Collegiality and Public Communication," the policy statement which was coordinated with the development of the "Statement of Affiliation Status," the Commission's new and more open way of informing the public about the status of the institutions it recognizes;
- "Institutional Change," which replaces a number of fragmented policies on substantive change and related topics;
- A greatly revised "Membership on the Commission on Higher Education," which also includes provisions for the avoidance of conflict of interest;
- *Framework for Outcomes Assessment*, a revised edition that is awaiting approval by the CHE/MSA constituency;
- *Designs for Excellence in Higher Education: Handbook for Institutional Self-Study*, which is currently undergoing revision and is scheduled for publication as a new document in 1996;
- *Handbook for Chairing and Hosting an Evaluation Team* and *Handbook for Evaluation Team Members*, which were both reviewed and approved by the Commission early in 1995;
- *Manual for Study Abroad Evaluations*, which was one of the outcomes of the Task Force on International Issues in Accreditation, and continues to provide the primary basis for the Commission's long standing study abroad program reviews; and
- "Statement on the Application of Equity and Diversity in the Accreditation Process," which was adopted in 1990.

In addition, the Commission launched, in 1994, a comprehensive schedule for the review of all other policy and procedural documents to bring them in line with the revised *Characteristics of Excellence* and contemporary practice in higher education. Authorized and operational is the Task Force on Graduate and Professional Education and more recently authorized, but not yet operational, is the Task Force on Distance Education. It is anticipated that the Commission will appoint a task force on the nature and role of faculty during 1996, clearly a high priority in the existing Three-Year Plan of the Commission.

A Statistical Profile of the Region

Given the changes that have occurred in the profiles of colleges and universities in the Middle States region in the last seven years, readers should review the statistics for the period from 1988 to 1995.

From my graduate school days, I vividly recall a remark by my statistics professor that statistics can tell any story we want them to tell. Often, bare statistics tell only part of the story. Although previous issues of the *CHE Letter* and annual reports of the Executive Director presented statistics on the actions of the Commission and on people involved in the many protocols of the Commission, this report presents statistics for the seven years that I have been Executive Director and includes a comparative analysis of the data. In addition, there are profiles of our constituent institutions by Carnegie type.

Even though I have observed for a long time the data provided in Annual Institutional Profiles (AIPs, called Annual Institutional Data Summaries until 1989), there are some new revelations, even for me, in the analyses.

The AIP data for 1995 provide some interesting and useful information about the characteristics of institutions in the region, especially in terms of their number, types, sponsorship, enrollment, faculty, library resources and information literacy programs, and educational and general expenditures. Other sources of Commission data offer valuable insights on the perceived value of and actual participation in the self-study, peer review, and accreditation process as well as the level of participation by a diverse group of constituents in our workshops and conferences.

Numbers and Types of Institutions

There are 501 members and candidates in 1995, a "loss" of four institutions from the 506 there were in 1988 (Table 2). However, one loss occurred when two institutions merged.

Because of the long history of higher education in the Middle Atlantic States, it probably comes as no surprise to readers that there are more independent (private) than public degree-granting institutions. Of the 501 members and candidates, 291 (58 percent) were independent and 210 (42 percent) were public institutions (Table 3).

Enrollment and Faculty

Enrollment at public institutions currently is 1,520,383 (62 percent of the total enrollment), compared to 930,255 students (38 percent) at independent institutions (Table 4).

Table 2
Accredited and Candidate Institutions in the Middle States Region
[As of CHE Fiscal Year Ending June 30]

Status	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	Average
Accredited Institutions	495	496	495	495	498	497	495	496
Candidate Institutions	11	11	10	10	6	7	6	9
Total Institutions	506	507	505	505	504	504	501	505

Table 3

Types of Institutions

Type of Institution	Independent	Public	Total	(Percent)
Two-year	22	110	132	(26.3)
Liberal Arts	105	8	113	(22.6)
Specialized	64	22	86	(17.2)
Comprehensive	68	55	123	(24.6)
Doctoral	14	7	21	(4.2)
Research	16	8	24	(4.8)
Proprietary/ Corporate	2	n/a	2	(0.3)
Total	291	210	501	
Percent	58	42	100	

Table 4

Undergraduate and Graduate Enrollment by Sponsor and Type of Institution

	Undergraduate		Graduate			
Sponsors	**Part-time**	**Full-time**	**Part-time**	**Full-Time**	**Total**	**(Percent)**
Independent	175,760	496,298	145,439	112,758	930,255	(38)
Public	549,391	795,975	104,614	70,403	1,520,383	(62)
Total					2,450,638	(100)

	Undergraduate		Graduate			
Type	**Part-time**	**Full-time**	**Part-time**	**Full-Time**	**Total**	**(Percent)**
Two-year	369,759	305,334	n/a	n/a	675,093	(27.5)
Liberal Arts	41,941	153,214	7,960	2,785	205,900	(8.4)
Specialized	29,206	64,653	12,575	23,164	129,598	(5.3)
Comprehensive	206,850	451,765	115,603	30,367	804,585	(32.8)
Doctoral	19,916	88,272	39,001	28,795	175,984	(7.2)
Research	41,696	232,796	72,886	94,131	441,509	(18.0)
Proprietary/ Corporate	17,229	98	582	60	17,969	(0.7)

Table 5
Full-time and Part-time Faculty by Sponsor and Type of Institution

Sponsorship	Full-time	Part-time /Adjunct	Total	(Percent)
Independent	47,094	46,664	93,758	(48)
Public	57,482	44,982	102,464	(52)
Total			196,220	(100)

Type	Full-time	Part-time /Adjunct	Total	(Percent)
Two-year	14,254	24,635	38,889	(19.8)
Liberal Arts	9,701	7,906	17,607	(8.9)
Specialized	11,359	9,202	20,561	(10.5)
Comprehensive	27,362	24,599	51,961	(26.5)
Doctoral	9,666	6,674	16,340	(8.3)
Research	32,200	18,544	50,744	(25.9)
Proprietary/ Corporate	34	86	120	(0.1)

What may be more revealing is the fact that 26 percent of the Commission's accredited and candidate institutions are in the "Two-year" sector, which consists mostly of community colleges (Table 3). These institutions enroll 28 percent of the 2.45 million students in the region (Table 4).

Institutions classified as "Comprehensive" represent 25 percent of the total institutions but command 33 percent of the total enrollment. And even though 23 percent of the membership is in the "Liberal Arts" category, this sector accounted for only 8 percent of the enrollment.

On the other hand, "Research" universities have 18 percent of the full-time and part-time students but represent only 5 percent of all institutions in the region. When Research and Doctoral institutional categories are combined, the data show that these institutions represent 9 percent of the membership and enroll 25 percent of all students.

Even though a change in the Bylaws of the Middle States Association during the early 1970s allowed the Commission to recognize proprietary institutions for the first time, there are still only two such institutions today, and they enroll fewer than 1 percent of the total student population in the region.

The roughly 2.45 million students (Table 3) are being taught by 196,220 full-time and part-time faculty (Table 5), which is approximately a 12:1 student/ teacher ratio.

While two-year and proprietary/corporate institutions have higher student/teacher ratios than other types of institutions, they also rely on a different mix of faculty. For example, the two-year and proprietary/corporate institutions utilize twice as many part-time or adjunct faculty as full-time faculty, which is not the case with other sectors.

Library and Information Resources

Another measure of institutional quality and effectiveness is the extent to which library and information resources are provided and utilized. From a statistical perspective, the 501 institutions in the Middle States region collectively reported having approximately 316 million volumes and nearly 1.07 million serial subscriptions in 1995 (Table 6).

By sector, as expected, doctoral and research institutions collectively maintain 77 percent of the 316 million volumes and 54 percent of all the serial subscriptions.

As *Characteristics of Excellence* makes clear, collections of information resources are but one measure of institutional effectiveness. Of a higher magnitude in the effectiveness equation is the extent to which library and information resources are utilized.

One strategy that is increasingly in evidence for utilizing these resources and improving undergraduate student outcomes is a program to improve the information literacy skills of students and faculty.

In 1995, 42 percent of the institutions reported having an organized information literacy program (Table 7), which is fairly consistent with similar data reported in a survey conducted of Middle States institutions by the Association of College and Research Libraries this year. Further, of those reporting in the affirmative, 56 percent were from the independent sector, and 30 percent were two-year colleges.

When one considers that, in 1988, the concept of information literacy was little known in higher education and the Commission was encouraging institutions to improve their bibliographic instruction programs, these data are encouraging. They suggest that an increasing number of institutions—especially

Table 6
Library Volumes and Serials
1995

Sponsorship	Volumes	Subscriptions
Independent	255,959,799	682,509
Public	59,840,842	386,646
Types	**Volumes**	**Subscriptions**
Two-year	7,683,138	56,414
Liberal Arts	21,166,479	110,033
Specialized	9,545,335	59,238
Comprehensive	35,335,284	270,389
Doctoral	183,878,406	97,497
Research	58,087,723	474,625
Proprietary/ Corporate	104,276	959
Total	315,800,641	1,069,155

Table 7
Information Literacy Initiatives
1995

[n=472]

Sponsorship	Number and Percentage Yes	(Percent)	No	(Percent)
Independent	110	(56.0)	170	(62.0)
Public	86	(44.0)	106	(38.0)
Total	196	(100.0)	276	(100.0)
Percent	(42.0)		(58.0)	

Types	Number and Percentage Yes	(Percent)	No	(Percent)
Two-year	59	(30.1)	64	(23.2)
Liberal Arts	44	(22.4)	66	(23.9)
Specialized	23	(11.7)	59	(21.4)
Comprehensive	45	(23.0)	71	(25.7)
Doctoral	12	(6.1)	7	(2.5)
Research	12	(6.1)	8	(2.9)
Proprietary/ Corporate	1	(0.5)	1	(0.3)

among two-year, liberal arts, comprehensive, and specialized types—are making steady progress in fulfilling the Commission's standard on library and information use.

The Value of Self-Study

The Commission gleaned convincing evidence during 1995 from its research on the self-study process as it had been conducted in the region over the past five years and from the results of a 1978 study of the five-years preceding that date. The response of institutions in both instances was overwhelmingly positive about the value of self-study in their institutional improvement. Nearly 94 percent of the respondents in 1995, compared to 92 percent in 1978, reported that the self-study process resulted in real improvements in policies, programs, or procedures.

Peer Review and Commission Actions

There were 354 regular evaluations involving team visits during the seven-year period and 310 special domestic and study abroad evaluations (Table 8).

In view of the Commission's policy to make extensive use of volunteer peer reviewers, it is important to report that 2,669 evaluators (or an average of 381 annually) and 444 team chairs (63 annually) participated in the 1988–95 cycle of evaluations. Approximately 23 percent of these evaluators and 29 percent of the chairs were women, while 18 percent of both the evaluators and the chairs were minorities.

In addition, the Commission processed at least 289 Periodic Review Reports (Table 9), which were analyzed by 291 external readers (Table 8). It also acted on 928 required follow-up reports, an average of 133 per year (Table 9).

At least 247 people were involved in special review team visits, 61 participated in study abroad program reviews, and 75 financial analysts reviewed a broad range of follow-up reports, Periodic Review Reports, and evaluation reports (Table 8).

The statistics on individual institutional actions clearly had a role in the Commission's responsibility for both its improvement and accountability functions as they relate to the accreditation of colleges and universities. There is strong evidence that self-regulation in the Middle States region continues to work for both improvement and accountability.

For example, in each of the seven years covered by this report, approximately 26 percent of the institutions recognized by the Commission complied with requests to submit follow-up reports, which documented the progress that was made on a broad range of areas where improvement and attention were required.

However, there has been a certain amount of uninformed public opinion that adverse institutional actions by accrediting bodies are rare. While the Commission has affirmed the accreditation of the majority of institutions which are seriously committed to institutional improvement and quality assurance, Table 11 indicates that the Commission has acted to:

- deny four institutions the status of candidate for accreditation;
- deny accreditation to four institutions;
- remove the accreditation of six institutions;
- completely reject the follow-up reports from two institutions because they showed a lack of progress in addressing the areas on which attention was requested; and
- deny two requests for the reconsideration of its accreditation decisions.

Even though institutions involved in the adverse decisions were afforded full due process and the right to appeal, the decisions of the Commission ultimately were sustained, either because the institution chose to make the needed improvements or failed to provide adequate evidence that deficiencies had been removed.

Table 8
The Peer Review Process

The summary data available do not reflect information for line items in some years.

Evaluations	**1989**	**1990**	**1991**	**1992**	**1993**	**1994**	**1995**	**Totals**
Evaluation Visits	42	43	40	69	62	48	50	354
Small Team Visits	2	23	20	12	8	11	13	89
Program Services Reviews	16	2	2					20
Appraisals of Readiness	3	4			1		1	9
Study Abroad Reviews	38	21	20	22	29	18	18	166
Evaluations with Professional Agencies	1	2	7	7	6	2	1	26
Postponed	1							1
Totals	103	95	89	110	106	79	83	665

Candidate Assessments	**1989**	**1990**	**1991**	**1992**	**1993**	**1994**	**1995**	**Totals**
Assessment Visits	4	2	1		2	1	1	11

Participants in the Process*	**1989**	**1990**	**1991**	**1992**	**1993**	**1994**	**1995**	**Totals**
Team Chairs:	66	67	57	79	74	38	63	444
First-time	21	19	12	32	23	21		128
Women	8	17	14	20	23	9		91
Minorities	7	15	11	17	18	11		79
Evaluators:	320	360	346	486	378	413	366	2669
First-time	67	128	96	126	79	98		594
Women	128	161	141	212	160	172		974
Minorities	85	88	85	123		89		470
Periodic Review Report (PRR) Readers:	24	28	40	54	44	58	43	291
Women	7	11	17	25	16	19		95
Minorities	8	7	13	12	13	13		66
PRR Financial Analysts:	4	9	9	13	19	10	11	75
Women	0	2	2	1	4	1		10
Minorities	0	1	2	1	2			6
Special Team Members	42	63	62	30	22	28		247
Study Abroad Evaluators:	12	9	9	8	9	7	7	61
First-time		4	1	1	4	1		11
Women		4	4	6	6	4		24
Minorities					1	1		2
Evaluation Team Associates	12	7	7	5	4	8	7	50
CHE Generalist Assigned to Professional Agency Teams	4		1	4	3	8	1	21
Total Peer Review Participants	484	543	531	679	553	570	498	3858

NOTE: The various groups of participants are not mutually exclusive lists, and individuals may be called upon to serve in multiple groups, depending on their expertise (e.g. Evaluators in one year may become Chairs in another year.)

Table 9

Commission Actions on Accreditation–I

Periodic Review Reports	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	Totals
Accepted	27	37	47	42	52	41		246
Acknowledged		2	2		3			7
Postponed/Deferred	1				1			2
Warned		1						1
Total PRRs Processed	28	40	49	42	56	41	n/a	256

Follow-up Reports	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	Totals
Accepted			89	79	83	83		334
Received			11	6	9	17		43
Rejected						2		2
Other*	173	138	44	8	29	28	129	549
Total Follow-up Reports Processed	173	138	144	93	121	130	129	928

Further Reports Requested	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	Totals
Via Follow-up Process						48		48
Via PRR Process						25		25
Via Evaluation Process						32		32
Other*			45		46			91
Total Further Reports			45		46	105		196

** NOTE: The category "other" means that the precise breakdown was not recorded in the summary data available for the year in question. In addition, the records do not reflect information for line items in some years.*

Table 10

Commission Actions on Accreditation–II

Warnings*	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	Totals
Issued			2		1	2	1	6
Continued/Extended					1		1	2
Suspended								0
Removed/Revoked								0
Totals	0	0	2	0	2	2	2	8

Show Cause Orders*	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	Totals
Issued	3	5		1		1		10
Continued/Extended	1	4	8	2		1		16
Suspended			1					1
Removed/Revoked	1	1	2	1				5
Totals	5	10	11	4	0	2	2	32

** NOTE: The summary data available do not reflect information for line items in some years.*

Table 11
Commission Actions on Accreditation–III

Accreditation Actions*	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	Totals
Permission to File Application for Candidacy							2	2
Candidate Status Granted	2	1		1		1	1	6
Candidate Status Deferred	1	1			1			3
Candidate Status Extended	1	1		1	1			4
Candidate Status Denied		1	1	1	1			4
Voluntary Withdrawal from Candidacy		1	1					2
Accreditation Granted	2	4		1	4		2	13
Accreditation Denied	2						2	4
Accreditation Continued			1	3	1		1	6
Accreditation Reaffirmed via Evaluation Visit	44	33	40	66	51	42	44	320
Action Deferred via Evaluation Visit		5		3	3	3		14
Accreditation Reaffirmed via Periodic Review Report (PRR)	15	25	37	49	41	44	37	248
Action Deferred via PRR	15	1				2		18
Accreditation Reaffirmed via Follow-up		4		3	1	2	5	15
Action Deferred via Follow-up			6	3				9
Accreditation to Cease: Institution to Close				2	1	1	1	5
Voluntary Withdrawal	1	3						4
Accreditation Removed	1	2	2		1			6
Accreditation Removal Suspended			2					2
Totals	84	82	90	133	107	96	255	847

** NOTE: The summary data available do not reflect information for line items in some years.*

Workshops and Conferences

In fulfilling its educational and training objectives, the Commission sponsored numerous workshops and seminars, serving approximately 4,211 people, of which 1,522 attended sessions on preparing for the self-study process and 984 attended sessions on developing Periodic Review Reports (Table 12).

Numerous forums and other events, dealing with a range of topics, from *Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education* to information literacy and diversity, supported the Commission's efforts to engage the Middle States constituency more fully in discussions about quality and excellence. The attendance of over 9,722 people indicates the high degree to which Middle States institutions are interested in the work of the Commission.

Table 12

Participants in Workshops and Conferences

Training Sessions	**1989**	**1990**	**1991**	**1992**	**1993**	**1994**	**1995**	**Totals**
Periodic Review Report Workshops	158	134	107	170	126	122	167	984
Self-Study Workshops		305	214	215	180	238	n/a	1152
The Self-Study Institute *(Estimated)*							120	120
Self-Study Post-Workshop Seminars						250		250
Workshops for First-Time Chairs	41		36	35	23	72	56	263
Workshops for First-Time Evaluators	70	98	81	32	70			351
Conference for Study-Abroad Directors	135							135
Chairs/Librarians Workshop		105						105
Outcomes Assessment Workshop			672	73				745
Workshop for Off-Campus Evaluators			80	26				106
Total Training Sessions	404	642	1190	551	399	682	343	4211

CHE Policy Development Forums	**1989**	**1990**	**1991**	**1992**	**1993**	**1994**	**1995**	**Totals**
CHE Policy Forum		300						300
Review of *Characteristics of Excellence*					424			424
Total Policy Development Forums		300			424			724

Issues in Accreditation and Other Public Events	**1989**	**1990**	**1991**	**1992**	**1993**	**1994**	**1995**	**Totals**
Information Literacy Workshops			73	53			75	201
Informational Forum			188					188
75th Anniversary Celebrations:								
"Kick-Off" Program (DC Press Club)					90			90
Six Regional Celebrations						435		435
Academic Convocation						876		876
Forums on Regional Response to National Policy Board Proposals							240	240
CHE Sessions at the Annual Meeting of the Middle States Association	463	409	416	309	310	350	n/a	2257
Accreditation & Quality Assurance Conference, 1995 *(Estimate)*							500	500
Total Issues and Other Events	463	409	677	362	400	1661	815	4787
Total Workshop/Conference Participants	867	1351	1867	913	1223	2343	1158	9722

Predictions

What are the issues that will face the Commission and continue to have prominence for now and the next millennium? Some are self-evident, and some are not yet apparent to all; however, they represent a broad range, relating to institutional quality and effectiveness and the future of peer review as we know it today.

For example, some issues of initial institutional eligibility and threshold standards still have not been resolved, for a variety of reasons. These include difficulties inherent in determining which institutions would meet threshold requirements; the problem of institutional self-perception; possible differences in applying eligibility requirements to new and developing institutions, compared to older established institutions; and obstacles associated with voluntary peer review and institutional improvement efforts.

Others might include a plethora of issues concerned with the recognition and evaluation of international education programs in a variety of formats; distance education program review and evaluation; attempts to organize and implement some form of national forum for accreditation, including the review and recognition of institutional and specialized accrediting bodies; the development of additional income sources to support accreditation processes; some serious reçonsideration of current accreditation practices, including self-study and evaluation visit protocols; and the utilization of modern technology to streamline and make more efficient the currently bureaucratic and labor-intensive peer review processes.

Given the complex nature of the issues described in this annual report, in terms of their future impact, and given the fact that members of the professional staff already have done considerable work on some of these issues as a part of the Commission's current self-study efforts, my presentation is limited to the critical aspects of the issues only and provides my considered opinion about their possible impact on accreditation in the Middle States region and elsewhere.

Global Concerns in Accreditation

Because the increasingly global nature of higher education will continue to affect accreditation significantly—especially in terms of finding meaningful ways to deal with constant pressures to recognize and accredit free-standing foreign institutions—those involved in accreditation and quality assurance in the United States and elsewhere in the world will need to direct serious attention to the resolution of a broad range of factors related to international education and attendant demands for and of accreditation.

Based on my own involvement with foreign groups and agencies interested in establishing accreditation and quality assurance mechanisms similar to those in America and having had to respond to dozens of requests from foreign free-standing institutions for information about how to become recognized and accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, I am convinced that the problem will become exacerbated if American accrediting officials do not take the leadership in establishing an international forum for the discussion and resolution of the problems associated with this global issue.

While the Commission has made significant progress in developing some responses to the issue, any final resolution must involve the collaborative efforts of all relevant parties. In my judgment, the solution cannot be unilaterally American and the final structure or system must have the support of American national and international stakeholders. Further, to maintain the integrity of the domestic and essentially American accreditation process, we must

insist on the development of international accreditation guidelines which take into account the wide divergence in educational standards and practices from one nation to another.

The Challenge of Technology: Where Learning Knows No Boundaries

From an accreditation perspective, the major significance of distance education lies in the urgent need for accreditors to develop appropriate evaluative criteria and procedures to review and assess distance learning programs. Electronically transmitted learning knows no national boundaries, nor is it a captive of regional accrediting bodies or state agencies. As with the development and expansion of nontraditional programs, which began in the 1970s, the rapid growth of distance learning programs today will require a coordinated effort by accrediting organizations, state regulatory agencies, and international organizations to find and implement appropriate solutions.

In this regard, I heartily endorse the position articulated by Administrative Associate Director Robin Dasher-Alston in a recent position paper on distance education and accreditation:

> The Commission has accepted [the] responsibility [of] establishing a dialogue with member institutions in order to examine the development, evaluation and assessment of distance learning. Distance education is an issue that demands that regional accrediting bodies work cooperatively to articulate policies and guidelines that are not limited by geographic boundaries, as well as develop and/or strengthen working relationships with specialized accrediting bodies...state education agencies, state coordinating bodies and higher education membership organizations.

Our challenge for the future will be to focus more on learning outcomes and less on the modes of delivery, except that the effectiveness of the delivery systems will need to be assessed.

A National Voice for Accreditation

Given the reciprocal uses of regional accreditation system in the United States and the reality that it serves as a national network, there is already a "national" voice for accreditation, albeit informal and uncoordinated. In the past, there have been successful and not-so-successful attempts to coordinate what is often referred to as "the system" through organizations such as the Federation of Regional Accrediting Commission in Higher Education (FRACHE) and the Assembly of Regional Accrediting Bodies of COPA, the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation.

Having been directly involved in deliberations by the "informal" National Policy Board for Higher Education Institution Accreditation (NPB), I am painfully aware of the sincere efforts of regional accreditors and other higher education leaders to find a satisfactory "national" structure or system for accreditation. On the other hand, I fully understand and appreciate the positions of those who fully embrace proposals for some form of national structure and of those who vigorously oppose the establishment of any such structure.

Based on my own examination of the pros and cons, I am persuaded that some national system or structure is necessary, if only to strengthen and to make more formal the existing regional "national" system. And when issues such as international and distance education serve to propel accreditation beyond regional boundaries, the need for a national forum to address the issues becomes more apparent and less "politically incorrect"!

Even though I would not be so naive as to suggest the specific design for a system to coordinate accreditation at the national level, I strongly urge the Middle States Commission on Higher Education and our communities of interest to create one that can address issues in accreditation which transcend regional boundaries and parochial interests, such as international education and distance education.

Based on our own experience with the federal government's recognition processes and the difficulties accrediting agencies and institutions experienced during the recent reauthorization process for the Higher Education Act amendments, I am convinced that some form of credible, non-governmental process is absolutely essential if the American system of peer review and evaluation is to maintain its integrity and effectiveness.

Another Perspective on Specialized Accreditation

Any system that is created and made operational will need to include a process for recognizing institutional and programmatic accrediting organization, because we cannot continue to deplore both the proliferation of accrediting organizations and the lack of coordination between institutional and specialized accrediting organizations. Rather, accrediting agencies which primarily recognize and accredit degree-granting institutions will need to respond more substantively to the public's call for streamlining accreditation procedures and reducing the overall costs of peer review and evaluation.

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education, as well as other accrediting organizations, must ask the question: Are there other, more effective, means of evaluating institutions as a whole and programs in particular?

The stakeholders of accreditation will continue to demand more effective and efficient self-study and evaluation processes, whether those objectives are realized through cooperative or collaborative arrangements between institutional and programmatic accrediting organizations or by implementing stronger program review protocols. For example, periodic self-studies and peer reviews might be greatly simplified if greater numbers of institutions reviewed their programs in a more systematic and rigorous manner and with greater focus on student learning outcomes than on process criteria.